

THE RIVER SURVEY.

What Led to the Accomplishment of this Work.

THE TRIP OF OBSERVATION

On the Virginia Chaperoned by Congressman H. H. Dwyer, in the Spring of 1896—After Viewing the Ohio the Members of the Rivers and Harbors Committee Recommended the Appropriation Which Resulted in the Survey Recently Finished—How the Work Was Done.

Cincinnati Star: The survey of the Ohio river by the government engineers which has been in progress during the last summer is now completed, and the crews have been discharged, and the boats have gone into winter quarters. The importance of this survey, which involves a final expenditure of \$25,000,000, is obvious to all who have given the least attention to the subject. The project is the preliminary work for the improvement by the construction of locks and dams of the Ohio that will make the river continuously navigable except when closed by ice. The history of this survey is very interesting. In the spring of 1896 Capt. B. H. Dwyer, member of Congress from the First district of West Virginia, took the members of the rivers and harbors committee, of which he was one, on a junket down the Ohio on the steamer Virginia, stopping at Steubenville and other points. The committee consisted of the following: Congressmen Warren B. Hooker, of New York; A. S. Berry, of Kentucky; Philip D. McCulloch, of Arkansas; Charles E. Towne, of Minnesota; Thomas C. Hutchings, of Mississippi; Rufus E. Plater, of Georgia; Binger Hermann, of Oregon; Samuel L. Stephenson, of Michigan; J. E. Reayburn, of Pennsylvania; H. A. Cooper, of Wisconsin; T. E. Burton, of Ohio; W. E. Barrett, of Massachusetts; Walter Reeves, of Illinois; B. H. Dwyer, of West Virginia; Charles N. Clark, of Missouri; and James A. Walker, of Virginia.

At the termination of the trip and a return to Washington upon recommendation of the rivers and harbors committee, an appropriation of \$25,000, with a \$2,000 contingent fund, was made for the purpose of surveying the river from Pittsburgh to Marietta, Ohio. It was estimated that twenty-five locks and dams to be constructed at various places between Pittsburgh and Cairo, would be necessary to perfect the grant Ohio waterway. The estimated cost of each lock and dam is \$1,000,000. The survey was made by the appropriation from Pittsburgh to Marietta, has been completed and, in the opinion of the engineers, seventeen locks and dams will have to be constructed between these two points alone. This, the upper part of the river, has naturally the most shallow places and therefore needs the most dams. The last survey of the Ohio prior to the one just completed was made by the government in 1874.

This survey established the distance from Point Bridge, the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, and the beginning of the Ohio river, to Marietta as 171.10 miles. The next survey established the distance to be 172 miles. The increase is due to the action of the water in changing the river's course. The recent survey was under the supervision of Major W. H. Heuer, United States engineer, of Cincinnati, and directed in the field by R. R. Jones, United States engineer, also of Cincinnati. The corps organized at Pittsburgh June 21, was composed of forty-seven men, who worked continuously to October 1, when the party disbanded and the men were discharged at Marietta.

It is proper to mention here just what work the survey corps had to perform. The distances had to be located and registered on the river banks. Soundings of the river's depths had to be made at

EVERY 400 FEET and their soundings recorded. The fall of the river had to be obtained. The height of the banks and its levels must be established, plotted and marked, so that future engineers on consecutive work will have a basis of operation.

All of this was necessary before the engineers could determine where the dams and locks could be constructed to accomplish the most good. The stadia system of measuring distances was adopted instead of the old-time mode of triangulating measurements. The stadia system is simple and greatly facilitates work. Three wires, delicately adjusted, are placed in the telescope of the transit. A rod marked with hieroglyphics to the uniformity of a Chinese puzzle is held in range of the transit operator's vision. The hieroglyphics seen between the wires were open books to the surveyor, upon which he accurately read the distances. Each mark of a certain character to be seen between the wires indicated that many hundred feet of distance, separating the rod and the transit. The further the distance the greater the scope of vision between the wires. Under this method accuracy of measurement is positive and unerring, and work can be done much more rapidly. The corps was organized for active work by dividing into sub-corps. R. R. Jones was chief engineer in charge, and W. D. Janney, of Ceredo, W. Va., draughtsman. One party, known as the main base line corps, was composed of J. W. Muter, of Wellsburg, W. Va.; Frank Ullom, of Yorkville, O.; J. B. Spencer, of Emory, Pa.; A. F. C. Spreen, of Cincinnati, O.; Charles Benham, Mt. Carmel, Ill. This party was in charge of United States Engineer Spreen, and had one of the most responsible parts of the great work to perform. It established the distances and located the cities along the river banks. Each mile had to be accurately established so that a bench mark could be placed. A bench mark is an iron pipe with the top end sealed. At each mile one of these pipes was buried in the bank of the river for future use and reference. Their location, once determined upon, has to be checked back or proved correct so as not to vary the one-hundredth of a foot. Such

HAIR-SPLITTING ACCURACY gives one an idea of the responsibility of the work. In future years when the government shall have appropriated the \$25,000,000

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necessary for the construction of the locks and dams, engineers in charge of the construction will start at one of these bench marks and be able to locate the ending and beginning of each and every one of the one hundred and seventy-two marked miles. On each mark is a brief record of distance, angle point and elevation. This record is also entered up in a well-kept journal, and eight copies of the mental faculties is required to realize the assistance both will be to the constructing engineers when the work shall have been actually commenced.

The elevation had to be established by the Precise Level Party. The corps was composed of A. B. McGraw, of Beaver, Pa.; D. S. Terry, of Louisville, L. W. Phillips, of Allegheny City, Pa.; Frank C. Stout, of Cincinnati; P. C. Campbell, of Wellsburg, W. Va. United States Engineer McGraw was in charge. The original elevation, the basis of all topographical measurement, was taken from the Pennsylvania depot at Pittsburgh, as secured from the sea level at Sandy Hook. Upon this basis all elevation calculations were made. The Precise Level Party was what its name signifies.

The work accomplished by it was made a part of the official record. From this record will be obtained the topography of the river's banks and immediate country for use by the contracting engineers.

There were two cross section parties, one on the right bank and one on the left.

The cross section parties measured from the water's edge to the top of the bank, noting the distance in their field book. These parties worked under great difficulties, being required to make a measurement every eight hundred feet. The difficulty was encountered in interference from willows and trees along the river's edge. The cross section parties also located the cities and railroads, their distances from the river, etc. Following in the wake of these men came the

CROSS SECTION LEVEL PARTIES. One on each side of the river. The work of this corps was to secure data pertaining to elevations and levels. The low and high water marks of the river were procured every eight hundred feet, also the height of the river's bank on both sides. The fall of the river was also obtained. Their work had to be checked or be proven to be correct within 1-200 of a foot.

After the cross section levels were established the sounding party performed its part of the work. C. B. Harris, United States engineer, of College Hill, Ohio, had charge of this work. The party obtained soundings of the rivers at intervals of twenty-five feet. In shallow water, that is at a depth of less than twelve feet, the soundings were obtained by measuring with a rod. A leaded line was used when the depth of the water exceeded twelve feet. The sounding party made a tabular report of its work, beginning and ending with every cross section line established by the previous sub-corps.

The final work in the field was performed by the Bench Corps. This work consisted of placing in position

THE MILE POSTS

And other marks and records as staked off by the surveying parties. United States Engineer M. C. Oppenheimer, of Cincinnati, was in charge of this work, assisted by John J. Cox, of Sistersville, W. Va., and Joseph A. Sedler, of Cincinnati. This party has not yet completed its work, and is still in the field.

The cool mornings prevented the precise level party from taking the field before 8 a. m., and for the same cause a cessation of work each day was necessary at 3 p. m. The low temperature of morning and evening effects the mercury bulb to such an extent as to render it unfit for use. So sensitive is this bulb to the heat and cold that it was necessary all season to employ a man whose sole duty was to protect it from the sun's rays with an umbrella. Once properly graduated and protected from abnormal heat and cold the register is infallible.

The data for the proposed improvement to make the Ohio navigable at all times and under all conditions having been obtained, recorded and plotted, the work will be completed and simplified by the chief engineer at the Cincinnati port. It will devolve upon him to present a report of this work to Congress with recommendations as to where the locks and dams shall be located, and the manner of construction.

This report will be made only after a careful study of the recent survey. Twelve months, at least, will be required to arrive at a conclusion, hence it is hardly probable that the fifty-fifth Congress will act on the subject.

The manner in which the surveying corps lived while in the field is interesting. A large quarter boat, built especially for the party and providing comfortable accommodations for thirty-eight men, was provided. On this boat the men slept and took their meals. The United States steamer Edna conveyed the men from the boat to the field of operation in the morning and brought them back at night. The fare was exceptionally good, the men contributing to the replenishment of the larder by capturing fish during the idle moments and at night.

The Edna is a small stern wheel boat with a history. It was this little boat destined to become the property of the United States, that conveyed the Pinkerton detectives to the Carnegie library and steel plant during the great strike several years ago. Despite the fact that a small hoitzer was mounted on the boat, the strikers bid defiance to death and made an assault upon the steamer, succeeding in capturing the craft.

The Edna, on the surveying trip, was commanded by Captain L. A. McKittick, of Cincinnati, who had for his pilot, John M. O'Donnell, of Pittsburgh, and the engineers, W. C. Culver, of Cincinnati, and William M. Shriner, of Wellsburg, West Virginia. George L. Hanston, of Cincinnati, was chief clerk of the surveying corps. T. H. Caldwell, of Wellsburg, and others, who started with the survey, were compelled to drop the work on account of illness.

THE RAILROADS.

Of recent years it has been the policy of the most successful railways to recognize the rules of civil service in the promotion of employees to fill vacancies or newly created positions. The Big Four, the Pennsylvania lines, and the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton strictly observe the rules for the promotion of employees. They have looked upon the matter in the light that if the employee was competent to fill a minor position he was worthy of promotion to the next position in importance when the occasion presented.

There are a few railroad officials, however, who hold to the old idea that if an employee is well qualified for a position he should be kept in it on account of his familiarity with the work. It is claimed by well-informed railway officials, large shippers, and other patrons of railroads that the policy of supplanting experienced and capable men in important positions by strangers is a mistake and invariably affects the business of the road in a manner which is detrimental to its best interests. As a result, also, the old employees, who in all fairness, are entitled to the positions, lose interest in the welfare of the company and render inferior service.

FOR OHIO VOTERS.

Ohio roads have agreed to make reduced rates to enable those engaged in the state capital to go to their homes to vote next Tuesday. They have announced a one fare rate for the round trip on that occasion. Tickets at this rate will be sold October 30 and 31, and November 1 and 2. They will be good for return November 3.

B. & O. TIME CHANGES.

The Baltimore & Ohio road announces these changes, decided upon at its recent time-card meeting:

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Train 6, Chicago and Washington, if more than fifteen minutes late will be run through solid.

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Postmasters and Pensioners.

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